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ABSTRACT

Teachers' self-assessments provide one indication of the extent to which preservice and on-the-job learning prepare teachers to meet the new demands of education. In 1998, 71 percent of public school teachers felt that they were very well prepared to maintain order and discipline in their classrooms. Fewer teachers felt that they were very well prepared to meet certain instructional requirements, including implementing new teaching methods, implementing state or district curriculum and performance standards, and using student performance assessment techniques. Teachers were least likely to report feeling very well prepared to integrate educational technology into their teaching methods or to address the needs of students with disabilities or of students with limited English proficiency or from diverse cultural backgrounds. Teachers who spent more than 8 hours in professional development in the content area of a specific activity in the previous 12 months were generally more likely than other teachers to feel very well prepared in that area. The exception was the area in which teachers felt most prepared: maintaining order and discipline in the classroom. (SM)

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December 1999

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National Center for Education Statistics
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INDICATOR OF THE MONTH

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

Teachers' feelings of preparedness

December 1999

Reform initiatives, new technologies, and changing student populations have required teachers to learn new ways of presenting material and managing their classrooms. Teachers' initial professional training may not have prepared them adequately to meet current expectations, so continuing professional development is important. Teachers' self-assessments provide one indication of the extent to which preservice and on-the-job learning prepare them to meet the new demands.

- In 1998, the majority of public school teachers (71 percent) felt that they were very well prepared to maintain order and discipline in their classrooms.
- Fewer teachers felt that they were very well prepared to meet certain instructional requirements, including implementing new teaching methods (41 percent), implementing state or district curriculum and performance standards (36 percent), or using student performance assessment techniques (28 percent).
- Teachers were least likely to report that they felt very well prepared to integrate educational technology into their teaching methods (20 percent), or to address the needs of students with disabilities (21 percent) or of students with limited English proficiency or from diverse cultural backgrounds (20 percent).
- Teachers who spent more than 8 hours in professional development in the content area of a specific activity in the previous 12 months were generally more likely than other teachers to feel very well prepared in that area. The exception was the area in which teachers felt most prepared: maintaining order and discipline in the classroom.

Percentage distribution of public school teachers according to how well prepared they felt to perform various activities in the classroom, and the percentage of teachers who felt very well prepared, according to the number of hours spent in professional development in that content area in the last 12 months, by activity: 1998

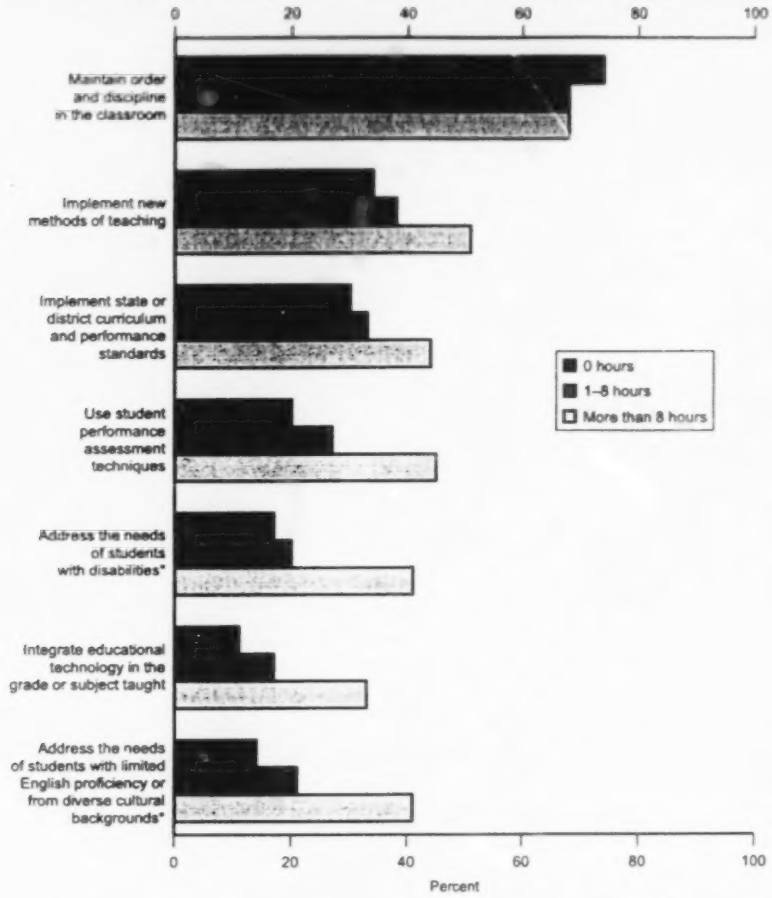
	How well prepared teachers felt				Very well prepared		
					Hours of professional development		
Activity	Very well prepared	Moderately well prepared	Somewhat well prepared	Not at all prepared	0 hours	1–8 hours	More than 8 hours
Maintain order and discipline in the classroom	71	24	4	1	74	68	68
Implement new methods of teaching (e.g., cooperative learning)	41	41	16	2	34	38	51
Implement state or district curriculum and performance standards	36	41	20	3	30	33	44
Use student performance assessment techniques (e.g., methods of testing, applying results to modify instruction)	28	41	26	4	20	27	45
Address the needs of students with disabilities*	21	41	30	7	17	20	41
Integrate educational technology in the grade or subject taught	20	37	34	9	11	17	33
Address the needs of students with limited English proficiency or from diverse cultural backgrounds*	20	33	30	17	14	21	41

* Percentages based on teachers who teach such students.

NOTE: Details may not add to 100 due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System, Teacher Survey on Professional Development and Training, 1998.

Percentage of public school teachers who felt they were very well prepared to perform various activities in the classroom, according to the number of hours spent in professional development in that content area, in the last 12 months, by activity: 1998


0
20
40
60
80
100
Maintain order and discipline in the classroom
Implement new methods of teaching
Implement state or district curriculum and performance standards
Use student performance assessment techniques
Address the needs of students with disabilities*
Integrate educational technology in the grade or subject taught
Address the needs of students with limited English proficiency or from diverse cultural backgrounds*
0 hours
1–8 hours
More than 8 hours
Percent

* Percentages based on teachers who teach such students.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System, Teacher Survey on Professional Development and Training, 1998.

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